1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

583 [177] (Peter Tom) were dashed when, after a period of living with his sweetheart, the girl's father (River Joe) forbade the legalization of the union by the missionary.

The English word "married" is generally reserved by Kaska speakers to designate unions which have been sanctioned by the Roman Catholic missionary. Approximately four out of five families with children have been instituted with religious sanction and the ideal attitudes of the people are strongly in favor of such "church marriages." "Married more better," River Joe explained. "No married, people split all the time that way." Generally by the time religious recognition of a marriage is sought, the couple have already "stayed together" in the girl's family for a year or more. Such staying together, once it has continued for a time, can be said to constitute "Injun married" or "blanket marriage."

From the foregoing it will be clear that no hard and fast line can be drawn between the period of bride service and the inception of a marriage relationship. Often the two gradually merge one into the other and it is mainly by the boy's behavior toward the girl that a state of marriage can be diagnosed. If the boy appears in public with his finacée, buys grub for her, and if they share their own dwelling, then marriage has occurred. Even these diagnostics may lack clear significance, however, in the case of an unattached older adolescent girl who seeks support for the winter by living with a youth (who purchases a joint winter outfit) but in the summer returns to independent living.

591 [553] Following marriage, the woman gradually becomes known by the man's surname. The husband builds a cabin or tent frame near his wife's parents' dwelling. The form of marriage is always monogamous and has been so during the past forty years.

595 One rather exceptional instance of what might be considered as true polyandry was noted. For five years Dorothy Plover had been married to a white man who acknowledged some slight degree of Cree ancestry. He was much older than Dorothy and by him she had borne one child. In Lower Post, while continuing to live with this husband, Dorothy simultaneously began to live with another and also much older white man (her first husband's employer), who allegedly fathered her second child. After some months, Dorothy's first husband, although he continued to refer to the woman as his wife, moved a short distance from the town and Dorothy began openly to live with the putative father of her second baby. This behavior was commented upon rather unfavorably by several Indians, who referred to Dorothy's revival of an "old fashioned way." Dorothy's father, a Tahltan Indian, raised no serious objection to the second union when he visited Lower Post.

586 [177] Non-support, cruelty, and infidelity are the reasons commonly given for divorce in Kaska society. Divorce is simply accomplished by separation, although when a church wedding has occurred this form of divorce is of course not sufficient to bring about legal dissolution of a marriage. Several years ago the remarriage of an improperly divorced man led to his arrest and imprisonment and the incident is still recalled as an illustration of the binding nature of church marriage.[22] Within the society little notice is taken of separation unless it occurs between a couple who have been married for some time and have children. In divorce, children remain with the mother unless they are old enough to prefer the father and able to care for themselves. Statistics on divorce were difficult to obtain. The incidence is undoubtedly high in marriages which do not have a legally binding character but here,

[22] See Old Man's autobiographical sketch below, p. 323.

(or purchase money) received by the bride's parents were distributed among their relations. Afterwards the same value of presents was given by the bride's parents to the newly-wed couple. From now on the wife followed her husband wherever he went. Generally he took her at once to his uncle's house where they spent their honeymoon. Later they generally started a house by themselves. It was the rule for the man to continue living among his people although he might have a separate house of his own. Thus most frequently wives lived among their husband's people. However visits more or less lengthy were occasionally made to the wife's people.

583 535 [591] [574]

Some say lads who were engaged to be married generally still continued to live with other young men in the young men's lodges, only repairing occasionally to the home of his fiancee's parents to do work for them. If he went off on a trip with them he lived in a separate shelter. Thus at the time of his marriage as a rule he was not an inmate of either his own parents' house nor of his fiancee's parents house. When the marriage ceremonies had been completed and his bride delivered, he did not enter with her into the house of the parents of either side, but straightway took her to the house of his uncle, cousin or some other relatives where they lived for a time. Afterwards the couple might visit or live with either set of parents but

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591 generally they lived with the bridegroom's people and only visited the friends of the bride.

Whether the husband stayed chiefly with his wife's people or his own did not matter, for during his [431] life time he was under obligation to give presents of food or other things to his wife's parents from time to time, and this was always expected of him. The wife was considered the property of her husband and his people, but this did not mean that others of his male relatives or phratry had any rights of intercourse with her, at least during her husband's life-time. Their [611] children, if they had any, belonged by right to the wife's people, being by descent members of their mother's phratry.

768 In case of death of their father or mother the children, if young, were taken in charge by their mo- [587] ther's people. It seems this was more particularly the case if the mother died and the father did not marry his 582 deceased wife's sister. Marriages between members of different clans and bands were encouraged because of the advantage of thus securing the right of hunting in different grounds.

Early marriages were believed in and most girls were married soon after they had finished their training at puberty. It is stated there were even some cases where girls were married before they were mature or had become pubescent.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Tselona, Espatotena
Frances Lake
Upper Liard

616 *Tselona.* Dichotomous social organization appears to have been absent among the Tselona or Nelson Indians and even today most of these people cannot identify with either exogamous division, except as they adopt a conventional designation following marriage with a woman from one of the western tribes. The fact that one informant from this group affirmed the presence of moieties may indicate his familiarity with the pattern rather than its adoption by the easterly people.

Espatotena. Jenness reports absence of dual organization on the South Nahani and Beaver rivers.[21]

Frances Lake Kaska. Two moieties, the Wolf and Crow, were probably present aboriginally in the Frances Lake area as they are today.[22]

SOCIAL PRESSURE—LAW AND WAR

626 In this section we propose to discuss the social pressure exerted upon members of the community who departed from expected norms of behavior as well as the pressure exercised upon or by outsiders. The first type of pressure includes behavior usually called customary law, while the second corresponds to war. Norms governing property relations and interpersonal conduct will be presented along with the description of the sanctions available for enforcing those norms.

471 *Upper Liard Kaska.* With the exception of beaver creeks, the microcosmic band did
423 not enjoy exclusive ownership rights to any territory. In other words no family-hunting-ground system existed in the aboriginal period. Indians felt free to hunt or fish anywhere within "their own country," i.e., the territory customarily inhabited by the macrocosmic band. Generally a man avoided those regions which he knew another family to be currently exploiting. Each family (it is not clear if extended family is implied) controlled its own beaver streams, ownership of these residing in the man, although the
• [591] entire family shared in the resources. Marriages did not secure new beaver grounds for the husband, who had the choice of returning to his parents' creek to hunt or of taking the animals on his father-in-law's territory. The former pattern seems unlikely because it would result in bilocal residence, a pattern to which informants did not allude. The informant (O) maintained strongly that family control of beaver streams antedated
[552] white contact. Ownership was symbolically expressed in the custom of naming such creeks.[23] Other property marks were denied. The development of possessory rights with

George Adsit.) Jenness echos Teit in speaking of a tripartite class structure featuring nobles, commoners, and slaves for the Tahltan. Children of the slaves retained the status of their parents but commoners could raise their rank by potlatching. Jenness, *Indians of Canada* (1932), 373.

[21] Jenness, *Indians of Canada* (1932), 399.

[22] For information of dichotomous grouping north of Frances Lake see above, p. 85.

[23] McLean reports that among the Mackenzie River Slave "the hunter who first finds a beaver lodge claims it as his property, but his claim is not always respected." (McLean, *Notes of a Twenty-Five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory* [1932], 343). Among the Pelly River people "each Indian has his own beaver country where he can go at any time and get his dinner, as the beaver, if not disturbed, will stay for years in one place or close in that neighborhood. He arrives at his beaver country to find some one has been before him and not only taken his dinner but also his money in the shape of the beaver skins, and if he catches the man that did it as a rule there is trouble of some kind. This is how

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard

583 584 his capacity as a provider and worker. With the consent of the girl assured, a boy communicated his plans to his parents. Following their approval his mother visited the girl's mother and the two families arranged a feast at which they exchanged gifts amidst much joking and expressions of good feeling.[33] The two fathers addressed each other "brother-in-law" while the mothers said "sister-in-law." Following the celebration the couple still refrained from openly sleeping together for another four or five days, perhaps out of shyness.

583 585 A variant pattern of marriage occurred when a young girl, who had begun to menstruate, named the boy who had "started" her. The mother then informed the youth's mother whereupon it was up to the latter to accept the girl as a daughter-in-law. Should the seducer have been a poor hunter, the girl's family might claim one of his more adept brothers for a son-in-law. Elopements when a girl's parents rejected a suitor took place with the young couple running off, sometimes to another country. With time the parents could usually be won over, perhaps after the advent of a grandchild. Two atypical forms of marriage widely distributed in the northern Athapaskan area remains to be mentioned, namely "wrestling for wives" and childhood betrothal. The first ensued when a strong, unmarried man visited a camp in which he was a stranger. Shaking hands he suggested to the husband that they wrestle for possession of the latter's wife. A man thus approached could decline the challenge. On the other hand his gambling impulse might be aroused. If defeated he saw his wife go with the opponent. Sometimes the angry loser directed sorcery against the successful challenger, aiming to destroy the latter's hunting power. Bystanders broke up a wrestling match 584 that showed signs of developing into "bad trouble" like murder. Occasionally parents contracted engagements between children, exchanging gifts of children's clothing. A girl still in infancy might be betrothed to a boy two or three years old. If both children survived but later developed a distaste for each other, their fathers might press them to marry. In cases of extreme recalcitrance a sister or brother was substituted for one of the partners.

[591] 595 Matrilocal residence followed marriage. After two or three children had been born a husband usually asked his father-in-law for permission to camp by himself. A "good" father-in-law agreed, adding some such advice as, "Be careful; don't go up in the mountain in winter" (because of the many slippery and dangerous places where a hunter could meet injury). Monogamous families were most common. Few men could afford to support as many as two wives and the children they produced.[34] Polygyny

[33] "Among the Pellys and Little Salmons," the custom was that if a man wanted a wife he made her a present of some kind. If he was satisfactory as a son-in-law to the girl's parents the present was kept, if not, it was returned. If the present was kept he had to keep on giving game and skins to the girl and her parents. (Field, *Unpublished manuscript* [1913], 9.) Among the Tlingit, when an engagement between a boy and girl had been concluded, the boy's mother gave gifts to the girl's family which were distributed by the husband among his "daughter's people." Then he gave a dowry to the suitor's friends. Swanton, *Social Condition, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* (1908), 428.

[34] Informants reported that Taku men often had four or five wives. In the Pelly River area "there is no limit to the number of wives so long as you can support them, but of late years . . . there are very few with more than one wife." (Field, *Unpublished manuscript* [1913], 9.) Among the Tlingit polygyny was widely practiced. Jones, *Study of the Tlingets of Alaska* (1914), 120.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Dease River
Tsalona
Upper Liard

to a proposed match. Where such permission was withheld, elopement might follow. The eloping couple then lived alone or, more often, joined another camp. Sometimes angry parents pursued the young people and beat the youth if they caught him. In the normal course of events a young man undertook bride service for a year in the home of his father-in-law. During this period he contrived to have secret sexual relations with his intended spouse. A wealthy father-in-law terminated bride service with a feast, after which the couple were regarded as man and wife. Occasionally fathers arranged engagements between children. Contracted without gift exchange, these agreements were not absolutely binding on the young people and could be abrogated for sufficient cause. Only single men utilized the war party to secure a wife. Residence after marriage was matrilocal.

Sororal polygyny remained limited to wealthy men. Never did a man live with more than two women, plural wives "always got along with each other." The idea of an unrelated woman as co-wife was strongly resented and the presence of such a woman in camp would provoke endless quarreling.[89] Fraternal polyandry existed and is illustrated in a tale reported by Teit, titled "The Deceitful Wife."[90] A woman, married to two brothers, happened to be raped by a war party that prepared to attack her people. The ordeal weakened the woman but the enemy offered her ptarmigan. In return she promised to conceal what had happened. The mother-in-law, however, became suspicious and spoke to her sons. As a result the two husbands sensed danger and proposed to the wife that they all three enjoy a last good meal together. They thereupon killed the woman and fled. An upper Liard River informant reported knowledge of a Dease River Indian who had shared his wife with nine brothers. The ten men alternated in cohabiting with the woman and no trouble ever occurred between them. However, the brothers became extremely jealous when they saw a stranger talk to their wife and reported the incident to the senior husband who warned off the intruder.

Divorce sometimes followed adultery and occasionally a man quit a barren wife. Upon her husband's death a widow became the responsibility of her brother-in-law.

Tselona. People favored marriage between cross cousins. "Its good for them," the informant explained. The levirate and sororate both obtained.

OLD AGE AND DEATH

Upper Liard Kaska. Many Indians did not live to see old age. Others found their declining years filled with waning prestige and dissatisfaction. With menopause cul-

[89] Allard says: "Polygamy existed among them when they were all pagans. One man would take as many wives as conditions would allow. For instance, if he were a good hunter he would take more than one wife. When I visited the Kaska for the first time in 1925, I found no polygamy among them . . . they had never seen a Catholic priest in their country, but being in their native state more moral than the other races of Indians, the influence of their brethern, the Si kan ni, led them easily to abandon polygamy." (Allard, *Notes on the Kaska and Upper Liard Indians* [1928], 25.) We feel incined to ascribe the loss of polygyny much more to the influence of the white men who invaded the Dease River valley after 1872. Cf. Honigmann, *Culture and Ethos of Kaska Society* (1949), 44-45.

[90] Teit, *Kaska Tales* (1917), 461-462.